

## **Certified Lean Champions Help Local Companies Reduce Waste, Improve Productivity**

LAWRENCE & MERCER COUNTIES, PA – March 11, 2011 – On Thursday, March 10, eight representatives from various manufacturers in Lawrence and Mercer County were awarded certificates for having successfully completed the Lean Champion Certification Program sponsored by the Advanced Materials and Diversified Manufacturing (AMDM) Industry Partners of the West Central Job Partnership (WCJP). An additional twenty company representatives also expanded their knowledge of Lean Manufacturing by attending one or more of the seven classes.

The program, conducted by the Northwest Industrial Resource Center (NwIRC), included seven 8-hour classes held weekly at the Training and Workforce Development Center at LindenPointe Innovative Business Campus in Hermitage. Howard Wilson, the Lean Services Director of the NwIRC, taught the classes.

Certificates were awarded to those participants who attended all seven classes, completed assignments, including readings, creation of Value Stream maps and A3 story boards, and learned Kaizen and A3 Problem Solving techniques. They are: Michael Homick, Edwin Derr II, and Walter Lucas from CCL Container, Hermitage; Doug Rhoades, Alec Moyer, Larry Stainbrook, and David Rable from Roll Forming Corporation, Sharon; and Robin Barbour from Dairy Farmers of America, New Wilmington & West Middlesex.

Elimination of waste in business processes is one of the most effective ways to achieve dramatic improvements in cost, quality, and time. And one of the most effective ways a company can eliminate waste is to have a Lean Champion on staff – an employee who is trained in how to use the various tools available to implement valuable process improvements.

“Having a Lean Champion on staff enables a company to implement programs and processes that will improve profitability and competitiveness,” said Eric Karmecy, Assistant Director of Workforce Development of West Central Job Partnership.

Certified Lean Champions are trained to:

- Provide clearer focus on what needs to be done to improve profitability and competitiveness
- Demonstrate how employee actions directly affect goals
- Assure projects are linked to strategic performance via development of real time performance measures

Robert Christoff, HR & Safety Manager at Dairy Farmers of America, signed up with some of his colleagues, "I was worried how some of our production people would handle sitting in full day training sessions, but we quickly discovered that this was not a problem at all. Each session was interesting and the activities and exercises kept us busy! The materials and instruction were excellent. I would highly recommend it," he said.

Alec Moyer, PE, Plant Manager at Roll Forming Corporation in Sharon, noted, “We have had several members of our staff complete the Lean Champion Certification Program. We are very pleased with the program structure and the hands-on style of training. We are walking away with new knowledge that we are able to apply directly to our manufacturing operation. The new level of understanding of the Lean Techniques will allow us to become more efficient in our production and office areas, reduce our

inventory, and provide better service to our customers. This training allows Pennsylvania manufacturers to remain competitive in a global economy.”

Edwin C. Derr II, Lean Coordinator, CCL Container in Hermitage added, “About two months ago, my employer, CCL Container, had made me “Lean” Coordinator. Shortly after, the Plant Manager suggested that I take a class at Linden Point here in Hermitage, Pa. through NWIRC. Now CCL Container is in full swing with Continuous Improvement. Thanks to the training, I am able to spread “Lean” concepts to our fellow employees with more knowledge and confidence. I also feel that because of the tools and concepts that I was given, CCL Container will have the opportunity to become more efficient.”

The Lean Champion Certification Program is open to any manufacturers in Mercer and Lawrence Counties. The next program is scheduled to begin April 12<sup>th</sup> and will run for seven consecutive weeks, thru May 24<sup>th</sup> at the LindenPointe location. Manufacturers who are interested in participating should contact Jackie Haggerty of WCJP at 724-658-2501 or email [jhaggerty@wcjp.org](mailto:jhaggerty@wcjp.org).

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PHOTO: Howard Wilson, NwIRC Lean Services Director, (left) works with Lean Champion Certification Program student Doug Rhoades, Roll Forming Corporation, Sharon.